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I. Topic of Research

Effects of Consumers' Pop-up Retail Awareness, Fashion Consciousness and Perceived Benefits on their Patronage Intentions towards Pop-up Stores

II. Introduction

In the current market scenario, there exist enormous number of products and brands which are using different communication measures to reach out to consumers. In the world of globalization and internet driven economy, it is important for companies to offer more personalized consumer experience while interacting with brand during shopping (Niehm, Fiore, Jeong, & Kim, 2006). As shopping is no more related to buying of products only, rather consumers are seeking for fun, enjoyment and better shopping experience that matches their life standards (Chen & Fiore, 2017; Niehm *et al.*, 2006). Today, physical spaces are transformed into multi-sensory experience, promoting positive emotions and behavioral changes (Brakus, Shmitt & Zarantonello, 2009). Earlier, traditional retail stores were dominant for shopping, but due to change in market environment and rapid lifestyle of consumers, temporary stores came into existence (Surchi, 2011).

The concept of pop-up retail was first initiated by Japanese brand "*Commes des Garcons*" in 2004 which opened several stores internationally. These stores are now popularly known as "Pop-up stores" (Surchi, 2011). Haas & Schmidt (2016) traced the opening of first apparel pop-up shop in 1999 by US based company Vacant in Tokyo, Japan followed by the same pop-up shop in New York in same year. Still after decades of their existence, there is no clear picture about their origin. There are different store formats in retailing, but pop-up stores are taking

the retail world on storms. Generally, these stores are operated during festive season or occurrence of some event, where the consumers are stimulated to buy impulsively (Surchi, 2011). It is opened for a limited period of time, ranging from few days to a year (Pomodoro, 2013). According to (Niehm *et al.*, 2006), these stores are used to create buzz and attract attention of media and consumer.

Different researchers have defined the concept of pop-up in their own terms. Ryu (2011) defined pop-up retail as a "practice of opening a transitory, short-term and often unannounced retail space", which means it can be set up anywhere for a shorter duration of time at unexpected location. According to Warnaby, Kharakhorkina, Shi & Corniani (2015), pop-up store is "experientially oriented consumer-brand interaction, taking place within a particular albeit temporary, 'territory'". These stores are used as a magnet to attract consumer attention temporarily. Jones, Comfort, & Hillier (2017) defined pop-up stores as "any event that is temporary and involves people taking part as hosts and attendees". Fashion retail industry is believed to be most trend changing, and because of socially active consumers, buying preferences and motives are also changing (Ehsan, Mehta, Ali, Shahid, & Ndeem, 2019). Klein, Falk, Esch, & Gloukhovtsev (2016) explained "pop-up brand stores" as "temporary stores that seek to offer consumers more approachable access to luxury brands" that "are usually open for only a couple of weeks".

These stores possess certain features which differentiate it from other formats, as recognized by different researchers and academicians. Klein *et al*. (2016) constituted hedonic shopping value, store uniqueness and store atmosphere as features of experiential pop-up stores. While Surchi (2011) stated that location is the key element of pop-up store and it should be located strategically in high footfall areas, whereas, Kim, Fiore, Niehm, & Jeong (2010) and Pomodoro (2013) argued that location should be innovative. Warnaby *et al*. (2015) identified promotional, experiential and temporal characteristic of pop-up. Picot-Coupey (2014) featured pop-up store from retailers' perspective as location, store design & atmosphere, merchandise mix, promotion & events and sale space. Zogaz, Olk, & Tscheulin (2019) believed that scarcity of time and hedonic shopping value makes pop-up unique. Other than these, consumer engagement, exclusive & selective products, product policy, aesthetic and event interstitiality were identified [Overdiek, (2018); Pomodoro, (2013); Schaller & Guinand (2017)].

Today, consumer is more fashion involved and socially active, therefore, they look for innovative, unique and engaging experience (Lissitsa & Kol, 2016). Pop-up store provide consumer with such marketing environment which is highly experiential, focusing on brand promotion, operated at small places for less time and helps in brand interaction (Kim *et al.*, 2010; Picot-Coupey, 2014; Warnaby & Shi, 2019). Therefore, to deliver consumer value, retailers are moving toward creation of multi-sensory stimuli that enhances the experience of offering (Alexander & Bain, 2016). Pop-up stores are assumed to provide pleasure and fun shopping experience to consumers whose motive for shopping is to seek experience (Kim *et al*., 2010; Niehm *et al*., 2006).

Pop-up stores should not be considered as substitute to traditional stores rather they complement traditional retail (Klein *et al.*, 2016). They can be an important part of firms' omni-channel retail strategy with primary focus on brand communication and experiential marketing (Kim *et al*., 2010; Surchi, 2011; Taube & Warnaby, 2017). Different forms of pop-up stores were identified by different researchers. According to De Lassus & Freire (2014) pop-up stores can be mobile, constantly touring between different locations and showcasing their products. While, Surchi (2011) and Pomodoro (2013) collectively identified guerrilla store (unconventional), nomad store (mobile), temporary online store, temporary outdoor site, concept brand store, community store, test store and sustainable store; collaborative pop-up store, shop-sharing and digital pop-up stores were recently explored (Alexander& Bain, 2016). Also, Rudkowski, Heney, Yu, Sedlezky, & Gunn (2019) identified 2 unexplored pop-up types: market-based and brand-based pop-up stores. It depends on the objective of firm which pop-up type they will operate, as every pop-up provide different benefit.

Warnaby *et al*. (2015) identified four business objectives: communicational (brand awareness); experiential (brand engagement and communicational); transactional (sales and market share) and testing (new markets). Sales-oriented firms operate pop-up stores with the objective of testing new markets prior to the establishment of permanent store. While, market-oriented firms primarily focus on brand awareness, sample distribution, providing memorable experience, creating buzz on social platforms and generate positive word-of-mouth (Lowe, Maggioni, & Sands, 2018). According to Surchi, (2011) retailers should primarily focus on brand management rather than sales generation.

Pop-up stores are beneficial to consumers as well as retailers. It helps brands to provide greater brand experience; achieving brand awareness through positive word of mouth; it is cost

effective technique to test market and product (De Lassus & Freire, 2014; Klein *et al*., 2016; Picot-Coupey, 2014). On the other hand, it provide customer hedonic and utilitarian benefits; exclusive and unique products; easy access and brand experience (De Lassus & Freire, 2014; Kim et al., 2010; Klein *et al*., 2016; Niehm *et al*., 2006). According to Surchi (2011) operating pop-ups internationally will help brand to disseminate and communicate internationally. Further, she depicted that it is helpful in testing new market and establish store network. Pop-ups are also beneficial for small and emerging brands to create brand awareness in cost-effective manner (Alexander & Bain, 2016; Pomodoro, 2013).

III. Literature Review

There exist certain motivating factors which lead firms to incorporate pop-up stores in their marketing strategy. Seven factors were identified after consolidating different researches: building brand awareness and exposure, augmenting brand image and promoting the brand by generating buzz and word-of-mouth; driving novelty by providing surprising, exciting retail experiences; testing, adapting, positioning and disseminating a retailer in a new foreign market with minimal economic exposure; testing new merchandise and launching limited edition collections; building community and relationships with customers and other stakeholders; responding to volatile economic conditions and transactional (Alexander & Bain, 2016; Chen & Fiore, 2017; Picot-Coupey, 2014; Pomodoro, 2013; Ryu, 2011; Surchi, 2011; Taube and Warnaby, 2017; Warnaby *et al*., 2015).

Consumer behavior is categorized as cognitive (rational) and subjective (emotional) by De Lassus & Freire (2014). Distinct factors were analyzed by different researchers which impact the attitude and patronage intentions of consumers towards pop-up stores directly or indirectly.

Consumer Awareness (Consumers' Pop-up Retail Awareness)

Awareness is a relative concept which focuses on internal state or external event, by means of sensory perception. It works as raw material, which helps in developing behavior (Hussain *et al.,* 2008). While, consumer awareness means consumer is aware of information regarding availability of products and buying options. Within the context of marketing, companies focuses on consumers' awareness building in order to produce desired responses from the audience (Foroudi *et al.,* 2018).

Consumers' awareness is an instrument which is being used by businesses, as it effect perception and attitude of consumer towards a particular company or brand (Foroudi, 2019). According to Surchi (2011) word-of-mouth plays significant role in generating awareness. Woodside and Walser (2007) stated that retailers can increase consumers' knowledge and recognition about them by creating experiential retail setting.

According to Feick and Price (1987) influencers and bloggers play a key role in enhancing awareness among consumers. Therefore, they are typically invited on opening of a pop-up so that they can promote it via their social networks and create buzz (Robertson *et al.,* 2018). It is difficult for companies to operate successfully until and unless consumers are aware about their existence (Shahid *et al.,* 2017). Consumer will form positive attitude if they had prior experience, knowledge acquired, and exposure to mass media (Asiegbu *et al.,* 2012). Rudkowski *et al.* (2018) studied about consumers' purchase journey, where consumer awareness and recognition were examined in pre-purchase stage.

Kim *et al.* (2010) talked about proactive consumers who initiate discussion with other consumers and respond to request for market information. Also known as market mavens (Feick and Price, 1987) are effective source of essential word-of-mouth communication regarding opening of pop-up stores. Niehm *et al.* (2006) in his study found that young consumers are more aware about pop-up stores as compared to other age groups. Also, rural communities are least aware of pop-up stores. De Lassus & Friere (2019) has observed more receptive behavior of female consumers towards pop-up stores, as they look for novel products and unique experience.

Fashion Consciousness (Consumers' Fashion Consciousness)

Fashion consciousness is defined as "a person's degree of involvement with clothing styles implies an interest in fashion styles and someone's appearance" (Koksal, 2014). It is the level of perception or interest in a particular subject or level of importance associated with one's own personal value while making a purchase of a fashion product. People are more self-consciousness now-a-days, as they value the role of brands in improving self image (Nandini and Jeevananda, 2014).

Self-consciousness has two dimensions: private and public. Public self-consciousness is related with fashion involvement (Xu, 2008) as well as to fashionability (Workman and Lee, 2013).

Highly fashion involved consumers tend to be emerged as influential leaders in the overall fashion adoption process (Goldsmith and Hofacker, 1991; Tigert *et al.,* 1976; Naderi, 2013). According to To *et al.* (2007) consumers enjoy the latest trends in fashion, styling, or innovations and it motivates them to visit stores. Consumers are developing positive attitude towards fashion and want to maintain updated wardrobe to enhance their appearance (Iyer and Eastman, 2010; Walsh *et al.,* 2001).

Sproles and Kendall (1986) noted that fashion-conscious people gain pleasure and excitement from exploring new things and show a greater variety seeking behavior. Therefore, it is an important variable that has a lot of impact on consumer behavior, such as formation of attitude (Summers *et al.,* 2006).

Perceived Benefits (Consumers' Perceived Benefits)

Perceived benefit refers to the perception of the positive outcomes that are caused by a specific action (Leung, 2013). Kim *et al.* (2008) explained perceived benefits in the online context as "consumer's belief about the extent to which he or she will become better off from the online transaction with a certain Website". Sheth (1983) postulated functional and non-functional motives of shopping. Functional motives are related to utilitarian aspect such as convenience, variety of product and price whereas non-functional (hedonic) motives are related to social and emotional needs for enjoyable and interesting shopping experience (Forsythe *et al.,* 2006).

Hedonic Benefits: Hedonic benefits are non-instrumental or rewarding for their own sake rather than for attaining an external goal (Fiore & Kim, 2007). Hedonic shoppers look for pleasure, fun and enjoyment from shopping process. Also, they view retail stores as a place of entertainment and exploration (Bloch et al., 1994; Deb, 2012). Pop-up stores provides hedonic benefits through experiences or products that foster sensual pleasure, cognitive challenge and arousal of emotions (De lassus & Friere, 2014; Kim *et al.,* 2010). Hedonic consumer search for happiness, fantasy, awakening, sensuality, and enjoyment (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Tauber (1972) identified the self-gratifying benefits of shopping, which make the shopper feel better during the process of shopping by reducing the stress or tensions. Arnold and Reynolds (2003) explained 6 dimensions of hedonic shopping: adventure, social, gratification, idea, role, and value.

Utilitarian Benefits: Utilitarian benefits are rewarding because they help consumer to attain external aims or goals such as social or economic gain (Fiore & Kim, 2007). Utilitarian shoppers starts with a task and the perceived benefit depends on whether the task is completed efficiently or not (Sherry *et al.,* 1993). These benefits may arise in various forms such as enhanced consumer status after buying exclusive products, product trial & assistance from brand representative which helps in efficient buying (Niehm *et al.,* 2006; Kim *et al.,* 2010). Utilitarian buyers prefer to shop fuss-free, efficiently and in an objective manner (Yavas and Babakus, 2009). Consumer perceive more utility and value when they feel satisfied after getting a branded product at discounted rates with less shopping efforts (Batra and Ahtola, 1991; Babin and Darden, 1996).

Consumer Attitude (Consumers' Attitude towards Pop-up Stores)

According to Olson and Zanna (1993) attitude is the way we think, feel, and act toward some aspect of our environment such as retail store, program, or product. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined attitude as "learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner". Pan and Zinkhan (2006) found that consumers' positive attitude towards a store or store type increases the likelihood of their shopping at that store or store type.

Although, demographic factors help in understanding consumers' attitude but are not sufficient enough to gather knowledge about attitude towards pop-ups as every individual has distinct buying motives and shopping orientation (Wang, Siu, &Hui, 2004). If retailers and marketers have prior knowledge about consumers' attitude and their buying preferences, it can help in formulating strategies more efficiently and compete with other retailers (Burns, 2011).

Ryu (2011) studied the impact of fashion involvement and hedonic consumption of consumer on their attitude towards pop-up stores. While, Kim and Niehm (2018) examined the effect of brand awareness, self-experience congruence and fashion consciousness as antecedents of consumers' attitude towards pop-up stores. (Chen and Fiore, 2017 and Kim *et al.,* 2010) focused on consumer innovativeness as a factor influencing consumers' attitude.

Patronage Intention (Consumers' Patronage Intentions towards Pop-up Stores)

Patronage intention means intentions to recommend, try and buy products (Kim *et al.,* 2010). Purchase intention means to plan to buy a good or attain a service. It refers to the desire of a consumer to buy a particular product (Shahid *et al.,* 2017). The most recognized consumer purchase intention model was presented by Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, (1995) which

describes the purchase process in five stages: identification of the problem; searching information; evaluating the substitutes; making decision and behavior after purchase.

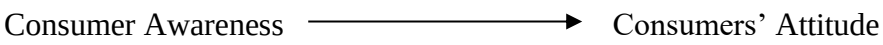
The marketing dictionary says that consumers purchase intention is influenced by various external and internal factors. It also depends on level of satisfaction consumer expects and what he receives. Rudkowski *et al.* (2018) mentioned post-purchase stage of customer journey, which includes usage, consumption, satisfaction, referrals and loyalty. According to Surchi (2011) word-of-mouth is used as unconventional communicational tool in pop-up stores. Klein *et al.* (2016) agreed with Surchi (2011) and stated that pop-up stores are an effective experiential marketing tool which stimulates positive word-of-mouth.

Relationships among variables

According to Niehm *et al.* (2006) consumers' awareness of pop-up retail stores is positively related to consumers' attitude towards pop-up stores. Ryu (2011) found in his study that customer lack prior knowledge about pop-up stores. Therefore, retailers should focus on increasing consumer awareness of pop-up stores as an innovative and exciting retail distribution channel. Retailers can utilise social media networks to increase word-of-mouth and buzz for pop-up stores, eventually resulting in positive store attitude (Robertson *et al.*, 2018).

According to Chisnall (1975) attitude can be acquired or moulded by influences arising from four principle sources: information exposure, group membership, environment, and want satisfaction. Kim and Niehm (2018) stated that consumers who have more knowledge about the brand hosted in pop-up store form favourable attitude towards pop-up store.

Proposition$_1$: Consumers' Pop-up Retail Awareness influence their Attitude towards Pop-up Store.



Pop-up stores are about "testing" and "trialing" new products and markets (Warnaby *et al.*, 2015). Today, consumers are socially active exhibiting higher knowledge about different products available. Fashion conscious consumers tend to be more confident and they don't prefer to buy from traditional retail outlets (Ryu, 2011). Therefore, fashion involved consumers

may hold positive attitude towards pop-up stores. Kim & Niehm (2018) stated that fashion conscious consumers tend to form favorable attitude towards pop-up stores. According to Zogaj *et al.* (2019) fashion involved consumers are less price-sensitive, which allow retailers to sell products at higher prices, but they should not sell the same product in traditional store if they desire to be unique.

Proposition$_2$: Consumers' Fashion Consciousness influence their Attitude towards Pop-up Stores.

Fashion Consciousness ⟶ Consumers' Attitude

Perceived benefits (hedonic and utilitarian) of pop-up stores positively influence consumers' attitude towards the pop-up store (Kim *et al.*, 2010). Chen & Fiore (2017) agreed with Kim *et al.* (2010) on hedonic aspect but only social-gain related utilitarian benefit affected consumer attitude toward pop-up. Niehm *et al.* (2006) considered novelty/uniqueness as component of perceived benefit and found its influence on pop-up store attitude. Also, if retailer or marketer is able to fulfill consumers' expectations through pop-up retail setting, then they can affect long-term consumer attitude towards pop-up store.

Ehsan *et al.* (2019) studied the impact of hedonic shopping value on attitude towards pop-up store and youngster buying behavior. Results indicated that hedonic shopping value, youngsters buying behavior and consumers' attitude are positively related to each other. According to Ryu (2011) hedonic consumption has positive effect on consumers' attitude towards pop-up store. Also hedonic shopping experience seeker tends to be impulse buyers.

Proposition$_3$: Consumers' Perceived Benefits influence their attitude towards Pop-up Store.

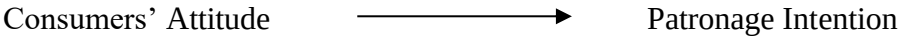
Perceived Benefits ⟶ Consumers' Attitude

Pop-up stores are opened temporarily in order to promote a brand or its products by providing a unique and experiential shopping environment. According to Asiegbu *et al.* (2012) attitude is main cause of consumer behaviour which help retailers to understand why consumers buy or do not buy their products. Consumers' positive attitude towards pop-up store will influence patronage intention of consumers (Kim *et al.*, 2010; Chen and Fiore, 2017). Consumers' attitude towards pop-up store has positive effect on consumers' intention to shop and may affect long-term intentions (Niehm *et al.*, 2006; Ryu, 2011). Centrality of buzz regarding pop-

up stores enhances positive brand image, long-term loyalty and eventually sales (Robertson *et al.,* 2018).

According to Zogaj *et al.* (2019) consumers' attitude towards pop-up stores results in short-term (willingness to buy) product-related and long-term brand-related consumer behavior (mediated by perceived uniqueness). Consumer traffic on online websites increases after their visit to pop-up retail stores (Zhang *et al.,* 2019).

Proposition$_4$: Consumers' Attitude influence their Patronage Intentions towards Pop-up Store.



Research Gap

After reviewing the literature, it was found that pop-up store is still less explored from research view point. However, the concept of pop-up store is gaining popularity in the market. This particular retail store concept has relatively finite studies, especially in India. Pop-up store is understudied as compared to other retail formats. Considering pop-up store attitude, variables such as consumer demographics, perceived uniqueness, consumer innovativeness, etc. have been included by researchers in their studies.

Very limited studies have been seen with consumers' awareness of pop-up stores and attitude towards pop-up stores, fashion consciousness and consumers' attitude toward pop-up stores, therefore, these antecedents can be explored. Although researchers have explored these variables individually with different perspectives but not in relation to pop-up stores.

IV. Rationale of Study

There is a vast scope for research and analysis as the retailing environment in the country is changing rapidly, leading to changed consumer expectations and choice of retail store format. Retailing is in a state of flux and new ideas like pop-up retail stores become valuable for firms to incorporate in overall marketing strategy. Pop-up stores are now receiving academic attention of researchers as it is understudied in India as well as globally. This type of retail format can be helpful in testing markets with new ideas which are appealing to consumers and moulding their attitude and shopping preferences. Pop-up stores generally emphasize on providing experience, therefore, it is an effective format for marketers to focus on consumers who are looking for experience and shopping enjoyment. This study will help marketers and retailers to know more about consumer behaviour in relation to pop-up stores, as it will examine

the factors involved in forming consumer attitude towards pop-up stores. Also, it will be useful for brand managers, as how they can promote their brand, create awareness and buzz among masses by using pop-up stores.

V. Objectives of Study

The following objectives are framed in order to carry out the proposed study:

1. To study the consumers' awareness of pop-up retail stores.
2. To study the effect of consumers' pop-up retail awareness on their attitude towards pop-up stores.
3. To examine the effect of consumers' fashion consciousness on their attitude towards pop-up stores.
4. To determine the effect of consumers' perceived benefits on their attitude towards pop-up stores.
5. To examine the effect of consumers' attitude on their patronage intentions towards pop-up stores.

The following alternate hypotheses are formulated after taking into consideration the propositions mentioned in review of literature and the objectives mentioned above:

H_{a1}: The consumers' pop-up retail awareness influence their attitude towards pop-up stores.

H_{a2}: The consumers' fashion consciousness influence their attitude towards pop-up stores.

H_{a3}: The consumers' perceived benefits influence their attitude towards pop-up stores.

H_{a4}: The consumers' attitude influence their patronage intentions towards pop-up stores.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The design of research would be exploratory cum descriptive in nature. The relationships among consumer awareness, fashion consciousness, perceived benefits, consumers' attitude and patronage intentions towards pop-up stores would be highlighted.

Type of Data

Primary data would be collected in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

Sampling Design –

The following design is intended for obtaining required data to carry out the study:

Sampling Unit - Sampling unit would be individual consumers of 18 years or above age, who have made visits to pop-up retail stores.

Sampling Area - To achieve the aforesaid objectives, sample would be drawn from National Capital Region and some other states of Northern region as it is seen in literature that pop-up retail stores usually operate in urban areas.

Sample Size - Sample size would be determined after conducting pilot study.

Sampling Technique - Non-probability sampling technique using convenience cum judgemental sampling would be used for the collection of data.

Research instrument - A well structured questionnaire would be framed to collect the data of variables under study. The questionnaire would comprise of two sections as described below:

Section A would comprise of demographics of consumers listing details such as gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, etc. Moreover, this section would include certain questions related consumers' awareness of pop-up retail stores.

Section B would include the statements related to consumer awareness, fashion consciousness, perceived benefits, consumers' attitude and patronage intention towards pop-up stores. The items would be extracted from the studies of Engel *et al.,* 1995; Wakefield and Baker, 1998; Baker *et al.,* 2002; Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal, 1991; Niehm *et al.,* 2006. Statements from other studies can also be taken up as per the requirements of the study.

The response of questions would be measured using a Likert type scale. A pilot survey would be conducted before finalising the questionnaire. Item analysis would be done to retain the constructs of questionnaire.

Statistical Tools - Descriptive tools like Mean, Standard Deviation, ANOVA, etc. would be used for simple analysis and for advance analysis Correlation, Regression, SEM, CFA, etc. would be used according to the research objectives and nature of the data.

VI. Proposed Organization of Study

The present study would be organised in five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter the concept of pop-up stores, its characteristics, types and benefits would be discussed. The variables of the study would be introduced in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

This chapter would provide the conceptual framework by reviewing the existing literature related to pop-up stores. It would assess the relationship between the variables of study as defined by various researchers. It would also identify the research gap existing in the literature thereby justifying the study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The proposed chapter would describe the research methodology including research design, sample design, construction of questionnaire and statistical tools used to analyze the data. Objectives and hypotheses of study would be mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter would illustrate the analysis of collected data in accordance to the objectives of study and interpret the results. It would highlight the important relationships among the variables of study.

Chapter 5: Findings and Suggestions

This chapter would highlight the major findings of the study. Further the discussion of the findings of the study vis-à-vis the findings of the previous studies would also be explained in this chapter. The chapter would end with conclusion, limitations and future research directions.

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